

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 January 2021

by Les Greenwood MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/C1950/D/20/3262602

48 Bramble Road, Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL10 9SA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Bellis against the decision of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 6/2020/1545/HOUSE, dated 5 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 24 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is a part 2 storey/part single storey side and rear extension, a 2 storey front extension, construction of a rear dormer and loft conversion and alterations to the frontage for parking requirements.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a part 2 storey/part single storey side and rear extension, a 2 storey front extension, construction of a rear dormer and loft conversion and alterations to the frontage for parking requirements in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 6/2020/1545/HOUSE, dated 5 June 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Map, Block Plan, 1912-01 and 1912-02A.
 - 3) The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the extensions hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing building, except as otherwise specified on the application form.

Main issue

2. Although the proposal includes several different elements, the Council's concern relates specifically to the proposed rear dormer window structure. The main issue for this appeal is the effect of this dormer on the character and appearance of the local area.

Reasons

3. Bramble Road is a street of detached and semi-detached houses characteristically with hipped roofs, of which the semi-detached house at No 48 is a typical example. The proposed box dormer would span most of the rear roof, including much of the area of roof that would be created by a hip to gable side extension that forms part of the overall proposal.
4. The Council's Supplementary Design Guidance 2005 (SDG) advises that dormers should be contained within the roof slope, should be subservient to the roof of the property and should be in proportion to the existing fenestration of the property. To this end it says that dormer cheeks should be at least 1 metre from the flank wall of the property or from the party wall with the adjoining property and must not extend above the existing ridge height.
5. In this case, the proposed dormer would be a sizeable structure set in by just under 1m from the main walls on both sides, in conflict with the SDG's guidance. It would also, however, be set down from the ridge and up from the eaves so that it would clearly be inset in the roof slope. The proposed glazing would furthermore be in proportion to the windows at the back of the house. The proposed dormer would therefore be reasonably in character with the house and would not overly dominate the rear roof.
6. The proposed dormer would largely be screened from public views. I saw at my site visit that there are other large box dormers in the area, so that this one would not stand out as an unusual or intrusive feature in either public or private views.
7. I conclude that the proposed dormer would not significantly affect the character or appearance of the local area. It therefore accords with the aims of Policies D1 and D2 of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan 2005, the SDG and the National Planning Policy Framework, to secure a high standard of design in all developments that is respectful to and in context with its surroundings.
8. I have also considered the comments of Hatfield Town Council, that this is a very large development. Like the Borough Council, I find that the proposed front, side and rear extensions would respect the design and character of the existing dwelling and would be reasonably subordinate in scale, in line with other extensions in the immediate area.
9. I impose a condition specifying the relevant plans to provide certainty. A further condition requiring the use of matching materials is also necessary to protect the character of the house and the street.
10. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Les Greenwood

INSPECTOR